

BUREAU OF WATER

June 15, 2005

To: Public Water System Officials, Cross Connection Control Program Managers,
SCDHEC (10) Recertification Stations, SCDHEC Certified Backflow Assembly
Testers, EQC District Directors & Drinking Water Staff

Re: **Amendments to the State Primary Drinking Water Regulations
R.61-58.7(F) Cross Connection Control as of April 29, 2005**

In June of 2000, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) notified every public water system in South Carolina that lawn irrigation sprinkler systems would be categorized as low hazard cross connections unless chemicals or an unapproved auxiliary water supply was tied into the system. Since that time, the Department has worked closely with public water systems in SC, a lawn irrigation sprinkler taskforce, and the general public to modify regulations regarding backflow prevention requirements for residential lawn irrigation sprinkler systems. With this in mind, the State Primary Drinking Water Regulations were amended to address backflow prevention requirements for residential lawn irrigation sprinkler systems. These regulations were published in the State Register on April 29, 2005 and became effective on that date. A copy of the Cross Connection Control Regulations R.61-58.7 (F) is enclosed for your use. Listed below in italics are the specific additions/changes the Department would like to bring to your attention. **If you manage a cross connection control program, you need to determine which policy your public water system will adopt and implement to address all existing and future residential lawn irrigation sprinkler systems.**

R.61-58.7 (F) paragraph (3) Residential Lawn Irrigation Systems. (3)(a) *“Low hazard residential lawn irrigation systems- Each public water system which has low hazard residential irrigation systems directly or indirectly connected to their public water system must have a written low hazard residential lawn irrigation system cross connection control policy. This policy must be documented in writing and must be approved by the governing body of the public water system. The policy must specify the minimum acceptable device for low hazard residential lawn sprinkler systems. The minimum acceptable device for low hazard residential lawn sprinkler systems is a residential dual check. If a water system specifies another backflow prevention assembly as the minimum acceptable protection for these cross connections, the policy must be approved by the governing body of the public water system with due opportunity being provided for public comment and participation. The written policy must:”*

- (i) *“identify the type of backflow prevention device or assembly that is required to be installed on low hazard residential lawn irrigation system connections.”*

- (ii) *“establish a schedule for the required testing of double check valve assemblies, or other testable assembly, if testable assemblies are designated by the policy as a minimum acceptable protection for low hazard residential lawn irrigation systems. The minimum testing frequency must be specified in the policy and appropriate records must be maintained to verify compliance with the established testing requirements.”*
- (iii) *“establish a schedule for the required change out of residential dual checks if these are the devices designated by the policy as minimum acceptable protection for low hazard residential lawn irrigation systems. The minimum change out frequency must be specified in the policy and appropriate records must be maintained to verify compliance with the established change out requirements.”*

(3)(b) *“High hazard residential lawn irrigation systems – Any residential lawn irrigation system that includes chemical additions, or is also connected to another water source which is not an approved public water system, shall be considered a high hazard cross connection and must meet the requirements of paragraph (4) below.” [See regulation]*

How do you comply with this new regulation?

In simple terms, the public water system must adopt and have a written policy prescribing which backflow prevention device or assembly you will require on existing and future residential lawn irrigation sprinkler systems. If you choose the double check valve assembly or other testable backflow prevention assemblies, then you must state in the policy how frequent you will require the testing of that backflow prevention assembly. The testing records must be maintained to verify compliance with the testing requirements. However, if you choose the residential dual check on residential lawn irrigation sprinkler systems, then you must state in the policy how frequent you will change out the residential dual check. Appropriate records must be maintained to verify compliance with the change out requirement.

Once your backflow prevention policy on residential lawn irrigation sprinkler systems is adopted, please mail that written policy to: **Mr. John Watkins, SCDHEC, Bureau of Water, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201 by December 31, 2005.**

Additionally, please note that when SCDHEC’s drinking water staff conducts sanitary surveys of your water system, they will be asking about your backflow prevention policy on residential lawn irrigation sprinkler systems and reviewing the appropriate records.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. John Watkins, Cross Connection Control Program Coordinator, at (803) 898-3567.

Sincerely,

Mr. Alton C. Boozer, Chief
Bureau of Water